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CUTTING COSTS IN ELECTRIC COOKING

Homemakers cooking by electricity or considering an electric range for the future will be interested in results of recent electric cookery investigations made at the Maine and Indiana agricultural experiment stations.

The investigators in both States found that the way the cook manages her electric stove and the cooking utensils she uses have much to do with the size of the electric bill. Two Indiana housewives who had identical ranges and cooked for families of the same size, differed as much as 46 kilowatt hours a month in the amount of electricity they used.

The Maine study showed several ways of saving electricity in cooking. One way was to turn the switch to a lower heat as soon as boiling begins, using high wattage only to bring the kettle to boiling. After that, low or medium wattage held the boiling temperature if the kettle was covered. So a lid on every kettle, except when cooking the vegetables that require an open kettle, is a second way of saving electricity. Using the minimum of water for boiling food and cooking several foods in the oven at one time also were means of saving electricity.

The type of kettle or saucepan that proved most economical was the one with straight, not flaring, sides, and a flat bottom that covered the heated surface but did not go far beyond, and that was made of heavy enough material so that it did not warp with heat. If the stove had open heating units, dull or black-bottomed aluminum pans prevented waste of heat. A shiny, polished bottom reflected heat away from the kettle and so required more electricity.

